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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/548,465	04/13/2000	Robert F. Bencini	15916-261	7431
7590 08/05/2005			EXAMINER	
Henricks Slavin & Holmes LLP			SIRMONS, KEVIN C	
840 Apollo Street			ART UNIT	
Suite 200			PAPER NUMBER	
El Segundo, CA 90245			3763	

DATE MAILED: 08/05/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/548,465

Applicant(s)

BENCINI ET AL.

Examiner

Kevin C. Sirmons

Art Unit

3763

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
 Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 May 2005.  
 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.  
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 23-26, 43-54, 64 and 65 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 3, 6-10, 12-16 and 49 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) ☒ Claim(s) 52-54 and 65 is/are allowed.  
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 17-21, 23-26, 43-48, 50, 51 and 64 is/are rejected.  
 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.  
 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:  
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  
 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)  
 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date 5/26/05  
 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_  
 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)  
 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Specification*

The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: Anti-tear means.

The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: It is the Examiner's position that Applicant has evoked sixth paragraph, means-plus-function language to define Applicant's invention. Therefore the Examiner requires the Applicant to amend the specification pursuant to 37 CFR 1.75(d) and MPEP 608.01(o) to explicitly state, with reference to the terms and phrases of the claim element, what structure, materials, and acts perform the function recited in the claim element. Please note that the MPEP clearly states, "Even if the disclosure implicitly sets forth the structure, materials, or acts corresponding to the means-(or step-) plus-function claim element in compliance with 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraphs, the PTO may still require the applicant to amend the specification pursuant to 37 CFR 1.75(d) and MPEP 608.01(o)...". (Also see **MPEP 2181** (Rev. 1, Feb.2000)) See Anti-tear means

Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 11, 17-21, 23, 24-26, 43-48, 50-51<sup>1</sup> and 64 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Webster, Jr. U.S. Pat. No. 5,431,168.

Webster discloses an elongate body (10), the distal portion of the elongate body defining a proximal end and being more flexible than the proximal portion (col. 3); a steering wire (36); a stiffening member, entirely located inward of the outer surface of the elongate body, and defining a proximal end that is substantially adjacent to the proximal end of the elongated body distal portion (38); a handle (fig. 8 and see handle throughout specification); as to claim 2, (stiffening member lumen (22) and stiffening member (62)); as to claim 4, (38 and/or 48); as to claim 5, (38 and/or 48); as to claim 11, (38 and/or 48)); as to claim 17, (fig. 1); as to claim 18, (see above rejections); as to claim 19, (fig. 1); as to claim 20 (see above rejections and anchoring member (31)); as to claim 21, (portion of the weld are made from stainless steel, therefore, a portion of the anchoring member is substantially radiopaque); as to claim 22, (figs. 1 and 4); as to claim 23, (fig. 4 and (51));

as to claim 24, an elongate body (10); a steering wire having a distal portion (36); an anchoring member (19); a stiffening member (48 and/or 38); an anti-tear ((49 and 15) note: anti-tear device has no structure and is not connected to anything)); as to claim 26, (col. 6 addresses diagnostic element and therapeutic element); as to claim 43, (fig. 1 and 4); as to claim 44, (49 and 15); as to claim 46, (interior of 49); as to claim 45, (49 and 15); as to claim 64, an elongate body (10); a stiffening member (38 and/or 48); anti-tear means (49) and steering wire (36).

As to claim 25, elongate body (10); steering wire (36); anchoring member (19); anti-tear device (glue 49 on the proximal end of 48); stiffening member (48/51).

As to claim 47, elongate body (10); stiffening member (21); anti-tear device (attachment means); steering wire (36 and col. 4, lines 64 and 65); as to claims 48, 50 and 51, (figs. 1 and 4).

### ***Response to Arguments***

Applicant's arguments filed 5/26/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With respect to claim 1, clearly the sleeve (38) correspond to the claimed "stiffening member" since applicant has provided little structure to define "stiffening member." As to the stiffening member (38), the claim only requires the stiffening member (38) to be secured to the elongated member. The claim 1 does not say how or neither does it indicate that the stiffening member has to be directly attached. Therefore, it is the examiner position that the stiffening member at the very least is attached to the glue (49), which is secured to the elongated body, and/or the stiffening member is secured to the electrode (19), which is secured to the elongate body.

As to claim 2, the stiffening member has very little structure. Therefore, substantially anything within the Webster patent could be regarded as a stiffening member. Secondly, the stiffening members (62) have some amount of stiffness. It may not have the same amount of stiffness as applicant stiffening member, but it still has some amount of stiffness nonetheless.

Additionally, applicant has not indicated in the claims or the specification, how much stiffness the stiffening members are required to have.

Therefore, applicant has failed to overcome the prior art of record with regard to claim 2.

As to claim 20, (col. 4, lines 63 and 64) clearly indicate that the weld can be in contact with the outer wall of the elongate body. Therefore, the rejection is maintained.

As to claim 24, the rejection has changed. Therefore, no arguments are required.

As to claim 64, the examiner has taken the position that, Webster sleeve 38 corresponds to the stiffening member" and that the glue 49 corresponds to the "anti-tear means." There is a variety of absolute support in Webster associated with this interpretation of the claims. For example, the specification in reference to figs. 1 and 2 clearly indicates that the anti-tear means (49) is used to secure the coil spring (48) and performs the function recited in the claimed means-plus-function element. Note: It is interesting that applicant failed to use all of the words used in the MPEP to describe how the means plus function should be interpreted. That word is "equivalence." Based on applicant's vague specification, the glue meets all of the requirements of the means plus function set forth in the MPEP. Additionally, applicant argues that "there is nothing in the Webster patent which even indicates that the glue 49 is adhered to, or otherwise interacts with, the sleeve 38". Unfortunately, figs. 1 and 4 clearly disclose and describes interaction between the two. Therefore, the rejection is maintained.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claims 52, 53, 54 and 65 are allowable over the prior art of record.

***Response to Amendment***

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The Examiner has reviewed applicant's respectfully submitted clever remarks regarding indefinite claim language and what one of ordinary skill in the art would understand. Applicant's arguments have clarified the ambiguous language of the claims 1 and 18. Therefore, the 112 rejections have been withdrawn.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kevin C. Sirmons whose telephone number is 571-272-4965. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 6:30-4:00 ALT FRI.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kevin C. Sirmons

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Primary Examiner

Art Unit 3763

8/3/05

*Kevin C. Harmon*